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ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OUTCOME OF THE GLOBAL CONFERENCE ON THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES

Report of the Second Committee (Part V)*

Rapporteur: Ms. Silvia Cristina CORADO-CUEVAS (Guatemala)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 97 (see A/51/605, para. 2). Action on sub-item (d) was taken at the 22nd and 38th meetings, on 30 October and 2 December 1996. An account of the Committee's consideration of the item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/51/SR.22 and 38).

II. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS A/C.2/51/L.7 AND L.35

2. At the 22nd meeting, on 30 October, the representative of Costa Rica (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China) and Colombia (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries) introduced a draft resolution (A/C.2/51/L.7) entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States". Subsequently, Canada joined in sponsoring the draft resolution, which read:

* The report of the Committee on this item will be issued in several parts, under the symbol A/51/605 and addenda.

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its resolutions 49/122 of 19 December 1994, 49/100 of 19 December 1994 and 50/116 of 20 December 1995, on or related to the implementation of the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, and reaffirming Commission on Sustainable Development decision 4/16 on the review of the implementation of the programme of action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,

"Reaffirming that, because development options of small island developing States are limited, there are special challenges to devising and implementing sustainable development plans, and that small island developing States will be constrained in terms of meeting such challenges and overcoming the obstacles to sustainable development without the active support and cooperation of the international community,

"Stressing the need for greater attention to priority areas of the Programme of Action, particularly transport and communications, tourism, energy, science and technology, biodiversity resources and climate change and sea-level rise,

"1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on action taken at the international, regional and national levels, inter alia, by the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, to implement the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, and welcomes in particular the action that has been taken by the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat to support the system-wide implementation of the Programme of Action;

"2. Stresses the importance of maintaining the Small Island Developing States Unit within the above-mentioned Department, and requests the Secretary-General to maintain and strengthen the level of staffing, structure and organization of the Unit, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 49/122;

"3. Welcomes the action that has been taken enabling the regional commissions to support activities to coordinate the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States;

"4. Notes with some concern the impact that may evolve from the decision of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development at its ninth session related to programme support for small island developing countries, within the framework of the Programme of Action, and requests the Secretary-General to implement fully the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolution 49/122;

"5. Calls upon Governments, as well as the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations, to continue to implement fully all the

commitments and recommendations that were made at the Global Conference, and to continue to take the necessary action for effective follow-up to the Programme of Action, including action to ensure the provisions of the means of implementation under chapter XV thereof;

"6. Recognizes the importance of the technical assistance programme (SIDSTAP) and the information network for small island developing States (SIDSNET) in the overall implementation of the Programme of Action, takes note of the progress made by the United Nations Development Programme in implementing General Assembly resolution 49/122, and invites the United Nations Development Programme to implement fully all provisions, both of the technical assistance programme and of the information network for small island developing States;

"7. Takes note of the support that has been provided by the Commission on Sustainable Development to following up the implementation of the Programme of Action in accordance with General Assembly resolution 49/122 and the Programme of Action itself, and invites the Commission at its fifth session to continue its support and attention to the Programme of Action in respect of the preparations for the special session of the Assembly to be held in June 1997;

"8. Welcomes with appreciation the inclusion of the development of a vulnerability index for small island developing States as part of the work programme of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development for 1996-1999, and, in this regard, requests the Secretary-General to commence work as soon as possible on the development and compilation of the index, to be prepared by the Department in collaboration with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Environment Programme and other relevant organizations and experts as regards the index, and scheduled for 1997;

"9. Requests the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat, in its coordinating role, to formulate appropriate modalities for mobilizing resources for effective implementation of the Programme of Action;

"10. Welcomes the report of the High-level Panel Meeting on Island Developing Countries, examined at the fourth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development;

"11. Decides to establish an informal open-ended working group within the existing Framework of Action for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, with the membership of all States, including all relevant sectors in disaster reduction, with a view to ensuring full integration and participation of small island developing States in the mapping of a concerted strategy for disaster reduction into the twenty-first century;

"12. Urges the international community to support small island developing States in their efforts to adapt to the sea-level rise that will be experienced as a result of the impact of greenhouse gases that have

already been emitted into the atmosphere and in improving access to disaster and warning information in order to enhance the capability of small island developing States with respect to disaster management;

"13. Calls upon the international community, and financial institutions, including the Global Environment Facility, within the framework of its operational strategy, to support commercial energy development in small island developing States based on environmentally sound renewable sources with demonstrated viability, to support improvement of the efficiency of existing technologies and end-use equipment based on conventional energy sources, and to assist with the financing of investments necessary to expand energy supplies beyond urban areas;

"14. Also calls upon the international community to support the efforts of, and to provide assistance to small island developing States as regards improving and acquiring the means of maritime transport and development of infrastructure in small island developing States, including airports and harbours, roads and telecommunications;

"15. Welcomes action at the national and regional levels by small island developing States, and invites all Governments, with the assistance of international and regional organizations, to continue to support and to provide information on all of their major activities under the Programme of Action so as to enable an adequate review of the aforementioned action taken at the national and regional levels;

"16. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session a report on the plans, programmes and projects for the sustainable development of small island developing States that have been implemented in response to the Programme of Action, as well as those that are under implementation and those that are envisaged for implementation within five years of the date of the report;

"17. Decides that the report pertaining to the vulnerability index should be tabled for consideration by the Commission on Sustainable Development at its fifth session, and that the Committee for Development Planning should table its views and recommendations on the report on the index, for consideration by the Economic and Social Council in 1997;

"18. Also decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-second session, under the item entitled 'Environment and sustainable development', the sub-item entitled 'Implementation of the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States';

"19. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session a progress report on the implementation of the present resolution."

3. At the 38th meeting, on 2 December, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Mohammad Reza Hadji Karim Djabbary (Islamic Republic of Iran), introduced a

draft resolution (A/C.2/51/L.35), submitted on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/51/L.7.

4. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/51/L.35 (see para. 7).

5. After the adoption of the draft resolution, the representative of Papua New Guinea made a statement (see A/C.2/51/SR.38).

6. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/51/L.35, draft resolution A/C.2/51/L.7 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

III. RECOMMENDATION OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE

7. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Implementation of the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 49/100 and 49/122 of 19 December 1994 and 50/116 of 20 December 1995, on or related to the implementation of the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, and reaffirming Commission on Sustainable Development decision 4/16[1] on the review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,[2]

Reaffirming that, because the development options of small island developing States are limited, there are special challenges to devising and implementing sustainable development plans, and that small island developing States will be constrained in meeting such challenges and overcoming obstacles to sustainable development without the active support and cooperation of the international community,

Stressing the need for greater attention to priority areas of the Programme of Action, particularly climate change and sea-level rise, energy resources, tourism resources, biodiversity resources, transport and communications and science and technology,

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[1] See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1996, Supplement No. 8 (E/1996/28), chap. I, sect. C.

[2] Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April-6 May 1994 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General[3] on action taken at the international, regional and national levels, inter alia, by the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to implement the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,[2] and welcomes in particular the action that has been taken by the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat to support the system-wide implementation of the Programme of Action;

2. Stresses the importance of maintaining the Small Island Developing States Unit within the above-mentioned Department, and requests the Secretary-General to maintain the Unit at an appropriate level of staff and improve the structure and organization of the Unit, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 49/122;

3. Welcomes the work being done by the regional commissions to support activities to coordinate the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States;

4. Takes note of the decisions of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, at its ninth session, related to programme support for small island developing countries,[4] within the framework of the Programme of Action, and requests the Secretary-General to implement fully the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolution 49/122;

5. Calls upon Governments, as well as the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, other intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations, to continue to implement fully all the commitments and recommendations that were made at the Global Conference, and to continue to take the necessary actions for effective follow-up to the Programme of Action, including action to ensure the provision of the means of implementation under chapter XV thereof;

6. Recognizes the importance of the technical assistance programme (SIDSTAP) and the information network for small island developing States (SIDSNET) in the overall implementation of the Programme of Action, takes note of the progress made by the United Nations Development Programme in implementing General Assembly resolution 49/122, and requests the Programme, in cooperation with Governments, to continue its actions to implement fully all provisions in order to operationalize the two mechanisms;

7. Takes note of the support that has been provided by the Commission on Sustainable Development to following up the implementation of the Programme of Action in accordance with General Assembly resolution 49/122 and the Programme of Action itself, and invites the Commission at its fifth session to continue its support for and attention to the Programme of Action, as an integral part of

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[3] A/51/354.

[4] TD/378.

the preparations for the special session of the General Assembly to be held in June 1997;

8. Requests that, in the context of the special session of the General Assembly, specific modalities will be recommended to examine all outstanding chapters of the Programme of Action, and for undertaking the full review of the Programme of Action in 1999;

9. Welcomes the inclusion of the development of a vulnerability index for small island developing States as part of the work programme of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development for 1996-1997, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General, in collaboration with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Environment Programme, other relevant United Nations organizations and non-United Nations organizations, to prepare a report based on the views of relevant experts on the vulnerability index, in 1997;

10. Requests the Committee for Development Planning, at its thirty-second session, to formulate its views and recommendations on the above-mentioned report, with a view to submitting those views to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session, through the Economic and Social Council, and to make this information available to the Commission on Sustainable Development;

11. Requests the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, in its coordinating role, to look into appropriate modalities for mobilizing resources for effective implementation of the Programme of Action and provide information thereon;

12. Requests closer collaboration and greater transparency between the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development and the United Nations Development Programme for effective implementation of the technical assistance programme (SIDSTAP), and requests detailed information to be made available to Governments on actions taken to this effect;

13. Welcomes the report of the High-level Panel Meeting on Island Developing Countries[5] on the challenges faced by island developing countries, particularly in the area of external trade, considered by the Commission on Sustainable Development at its fourth session;

14. Requests the Secretary-General to seek the views of Governments on an informal open-ended working group within the existing Framework of Action for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction,[6] with the membership of all concerned States, including all relevant sectors in disaster reduction, with a view to ensuring full integration and participation of small island developing States in the mapping of a concerted strategy for disaster reduction into the twenty-first century and in improving access to disaster and warning information

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[5] E/CN.17/1996/IDC/3-UNCTAD/LLDC/IDC.3.

[6] See resolution 44/236, annex.

in order to enhance the capability of small island developing States with respect to disaster management;

15. Stresses that small island developing States are particularly vulnerable to global climate change and sea-level rise, and that the potential effects of global climate change and sea-level rise are increased strength and frequency of tropical storms and inundation of some islands, with loss of exclusive economic zones, economic infrastructure, human settlements and culture, and urges the international community to support small island developing States in their efforts to adapt to the sea-level rise that will be experienced as a result of the impact of greenhouse gases that have already been emitted into the atmosphere;

16. Calls upon the international community, including the Global Environment Facility, within the framework of its operational strategy, to support commercial energy development in small island developing States based on those environmentally sound renewable sources with demonstrated viability, to support improvement of the efficiency of existing technologies and end-use equipment based on conventional energy sources, and to assist with the financing of investments necessary to expand energy supplies beyond urban areas;

17. Further calls upon the international community, where appropriate, to support the efforts of and to provide assistance to small island developing States with respect to improving and acquiring, through appropriate investment incentives and innovative measures, the means of maritime transport and development of infrastructure in small island developing States, such as airports, harbours, roads and telecommunications;

18. Welcomes actions at the national and regional levels by small island developing States, and invites all Governments, with the assistance of international and regional organizations, to provide information on all of their major activities under the Programme of Action so as to enable an adequate review of the actions taken at the national and regional levels;

19. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session a report on the plans, programmes and projects for the sustainable development of small island developing States that have been implemented in response to the Programme of Action, as well as those that are under implementation and those that are envisaged for implementation within five years of the date of the report;

20. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-second session, under the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development", the sub-item entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States";

21. Further requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session a progress report on the particular actions taken to implement the present resolution.